



STILL
10¢

HOUSE of SECRETS



MAY
NO. 44

*"The VALLEY
of DOOMED
CREATURES!"*

IT'S NO USE--YOU
CAN'T GET PAST THE
BEAST OF BELMORA!
YOU'RE DOOMED TO
REMAIN HERE AND
TURN INTO ONE
OF US!



A
**MARK
MERLIN**
MYSTERY

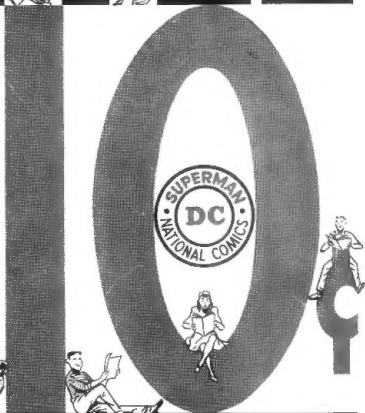
STILL

The word 'STILL' is rendered in large, bold, black capital letters. Small, detailed illustrations of people in various poses reading comic books are placed around the letters. On the 'S', a person stands on top, another sits on the curve, and a third lies at the base. The 'T' has a person sitting at its base. The first 'I' has a person sitting at its base. The second 'I' has a person sitting at its base. The 'L' has a person sitting at its base and another standing on top.

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LO

The word 'LO' is rendered in large, bold, black capital letters. The 'O' is white with a black border and contains the 'Superman National Comics DC' logo. Small, detailed illustrations of people in various poses reading comic books are placed around the letters. The 'L' has a person sitting at its base. The 'O' has a person sitting at its base. The 'C' has a person sitting at its base.

IT ALL STARTED AS A CONTEST BETWEEN TWO EXPERTS-- TWO MEN WHOM NO WALL OR CHAIN COULD HOLD! BUT THEN, A MYSTERIOUS FATE TURNED THE KEY AND LOCKED THE BITTER RIVALS IN THE "PRISON," FROM WHICH NO LIVING THING HAD EVER EMERGED-- WHEN THE MASTERS OF ESCAPE BECAME...

PRISONERS OF THE WIZARD'S MAZE!

WE'RE STOPPED AGAIN!
THERE'S NO WAY OUT
OF THE PLACE!



THERE'S GOT TO BE!
THAT CREATURE WILL
GET US THIS TIME FOR
SURE!

ON A TINY ISLAND, A LONE MAN PONDERES AN IMPOSSIBLE PROBLEM...

WHEN THIS PLACE WAS A PENAL COLONY,
ONLY ONE MAN EVER ESCAPED FROM
IT! HOW? I'VE GOT TO DO IT MYSELF--
IF I'M TO PROVE THAT I'M
THE WORLD'S GREATEST
ESCAPE ARTIST!



FROM HIS YACHT, IVAN BELLAC, ESCAPE
CHAMPION OF THREE CONTINENTS,
WATCHES WITH SATISFACTION...

HENRY LINK'S ONLY WAY OFF THAT
SANDSPIT IS THROUGH SHARK-
INFESTED WATERS! HE'LL
HAVE TO ADMIT
DEFEAT-- AND
I'LL BE RECOGNIZED
AS THE GREATEST
ESCAPIST OF
ALL!



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HOUSE OF SECRETS



BUT SOME HOURS LATER...

IT'S LINK!...SWIMMING TO THE MAINLAND! THE SHARKS ARE AVOIDING HIM COMPLETELY! I... I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!



SHORTLY... BACK AT THE MAINLAND...

YOU MADE SHARK REPELLENT FROM THE JUICES OF A POISONOUS NATIVE BUSH? I--I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

SIMPLE, BELLAC... I FIRST TOSSED A BUSH IN THE WATER, AND THE SHARKS RECOILED FROM IT! THAT GAVE ME THE IDEA TO RUB THE JUICES OVER MY BODY!



INTENT ON MATCHING THIS FEAT, IVAN BELLAC LOCKS HIMSELF IN ANOTHER ABANDONED, ESCAPE-PROOF PRISON...

HE'S BEEN UP IN BLEAK TOWER FOR DAYS! HE'S LICKED! ONLY A BIRD COULD ESCAPE FROM THAT ROOST!



INDEED, IT IS BIRDS THAT OFFER THE PRISONER HIS LAST HOPE...

THOSE HAWKS... PERHAPS THEY CAN HELP ME!



TENSE DAYS ELAPSE--TILL FINALLY...

WHAT'S THAT?... A HUGE BIRD? NO!... IT'S BELLAC-- LEAPING FROM THE TOWER!



SURPRISED LINKY THESE "WINGS" MADE FROM HAWK FEATHERS DROPPED ON MY WINDOW, AND CANDLE WAX, WERE ALL I NEEDED TO GLIDE THE 20 FEET TO THIS CRAG!





HOUSE OF SECRETS



THE RIVALRY PAGES ON--EACH MAN TOPPING THE OTHER WITH FANTASTIC ESCAPES--UNTIL, ONE DAY...

BELLAC--THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO SETTLE THIS! WE'VE BOTH GOT TO BE LOCKED IN THE SAME PRISON! FIRST MAN OUT WILL BE THE WINNER FOR ALL TIME!

AGREED, LINK!

TODAY
THE GREAT BELLAC
RECREATES HIS AMAZING
ESCAPES!

SO NOT LONG AFTER, IN ASIA MINOR...

WE ARCHAEOLOGISTS JUST DISCOVERED THIS UNDERGROUND MATE BUILT BY MENOS--THE ANCIENT WIZARD! WE HAVEN'T EXPLORED IT YET--AND HISTORY SAYS THAT NO MAN EVER ESCAPED IT IN OLDEN TIMES! ARE YOU BOTH STILL WILLING TO ENTER?

I'M
READY!

THE TWO BITTER RIVALS ENTER THE MAZE--AND THE OBSERVERS SEAL IT AFTER THEM...

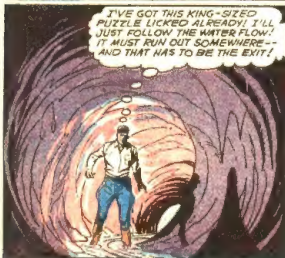
IT'S ENORMOUS--
ALL THOSE TUNNELS
AND PASSAGES!

JUST ABOUT WHAT I
EXPECTED, BELLAC! NOT
TOUGH AT ALL... I'M
GOING RIGHT! I'LL
WAIT FOR YOU OUT-
SIDE--IF YOU EVER
MAKE IT! ADIOS!

I'VE GOT THIS KING-SIZED
PUZZLE LICKED ALREADY! I'LL
JUST FOLLOW THE WATER FLOW!
IT MUST RUN OUT SOMEWHERE--
AND THAT HAS TO BE THE EXIT!

BUT IVAN BELLAC IS JUST AS SURE OF HIS STRATEGY...

OLD MENOS WASN'T SO CLEVER... I'VE
GUESSED HIS SECRET! BY FOLLOWING
THE SLIGHT AIR DRAFT BLOWING
THROUGH THE MAZE, I'LL ARRIVE
AT AN OPENING TO THE OUTSIDE!





HOUSE OF SECRETS



YET, ONLY MINUTES LATER...

BELLAC!

LINK! WE'RE BACK AT THE SAME PLACE WHERE WE STARTED! OLD MENOS FOOLED US... THIS MAZE IS MORE DIFFICULT THAN WE THOUGHT!



YES-- BUT IT'S STILL ONLY A LOT OF TUNNELS! THERE HAS TO BE A WAY OUT! MAYBE, BY PRESSING ONE OF THESE CARVED INSCRIPTIONS ON THIS STONE--

LOOK OUT! THE WALLS ARE STARTING TO SHAKE!!



RRUMBLE



THE WALLS AND TUNNELS... TH--THEY'RE CHANGING!

YES... TO A GIANT CAVERN-- WITH STAIRWAYS LEADING UP EVERYWHERE!

FANTASTIC!... OLD MENOS MUST'VE BEEN A GENIUS-- FAR AHEAD OF HIS OWN TIME!

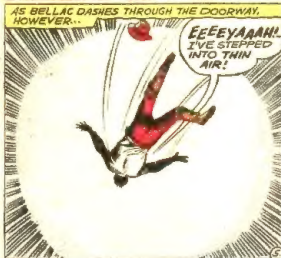
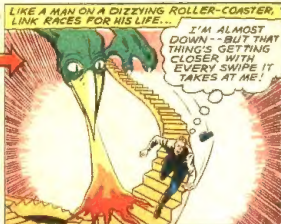
YEAH... I'M GETTING OUT-- BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE HAPPENS!



QUICKLY, HANK LINK RACES UP ONE OF THE STAIRWAYS...

IN ANCIENT DAYS, EVERYONE WHO TRIED TO ESCAPE FROM THE MAZE FAILED! THIS STAIRWAY'S THE ONLY ONE WITHOUT FOOTPRINTS IN THE HEAVY DUST... SO IT COULD BE-- IT MUST BE-- THE WAY OUT!







HOUSE OF SECRETS





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HOLD IT, BELLAC! OLD MENOS OFFERED US FALSE PATHS BEFORE... RIDING THESE BALLS WILL PROBABLY BRING US RIGHT BACK HERE AGAIN! I'VE GOT AN IDEA...

ALL RIGHT, LINK-- BUT REMEMBER... NO TRICKS!

SHORTLY...

WHY ARE YOU HAVING US HOLD ON THIS WAY?

BY MAKING THESE TWO GLOBES ORBIT EACH OTHER, MAYBE THEY'LL LEAVE THEIR REGULAR PATH AND CARRY US TO AN EXIT! HANG ON!

FASTER AND FASTER THE MEN SPIN THROUGH THE VAST, DIM CAVERN...

THAT ODD-SHAPED HOLE... WE'RE BEING WHIRLED INTO IT!

IF ONLY IT LEADS TO THE OUTSIDE... TO FREEDOM!

AS THE TANDEM GLOBES HURTLE THROUGH THE OPENING...

WORKING TOGETHER DID IT, BELLAC!

SKY--AND A HILL! WE'RE OUT, LINK!... OUT OF THAT AWFUL MAZE!

BUT NEXT INSTANT...

THUD!

CRACK

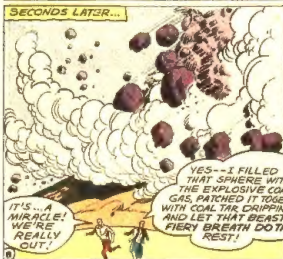
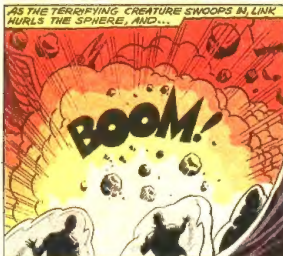
WHAT--? IT'S JUST A PAINTED WALL! MENOS TRICKED US AGAIN!

W--WE'RE FINISHED, LINK... DOOMED! THERE'S NO EXIT FROM THIS MAZE... NONE WHATSOEVER!

QUICK, UNDER THIS LEDGE! THAT WINGED BEAST IS RETURNING!



HOUSE OF SECRETS



Rip Hunter... **TIME MASTER**

in ANOTHER
3-PART THRILLER...

The ALIEN BEASTS from 500 B.C.!



A FANTASTIC MENACE
OF **TODAY** LAUNCHES
RIP AND HIS DARING
COMPANIONS INTO A
DANGER-PACKED
ADVENTURE IN THE
PAST, WHERE THEY
ARE FACED WITH THE
CHALLENGE OF...

- THE FLAME-THROWING
FUROL!
- THE ENERGY-SHOOTING
SNAAR!
- THE HEAT-BLASTING
DRED!

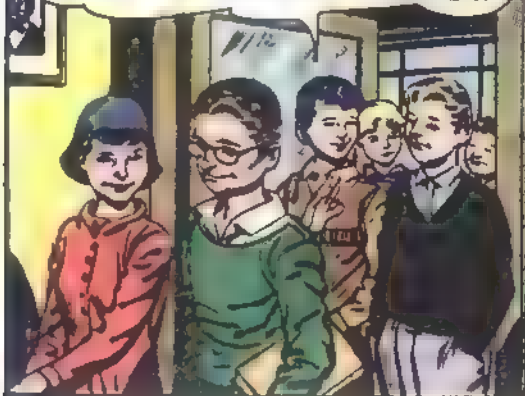
BE SURE TO GET ABOARD THE
TIME SPHERE
FOR THE MOST EXCITING
VOYAGE OF YOUR LIFE!



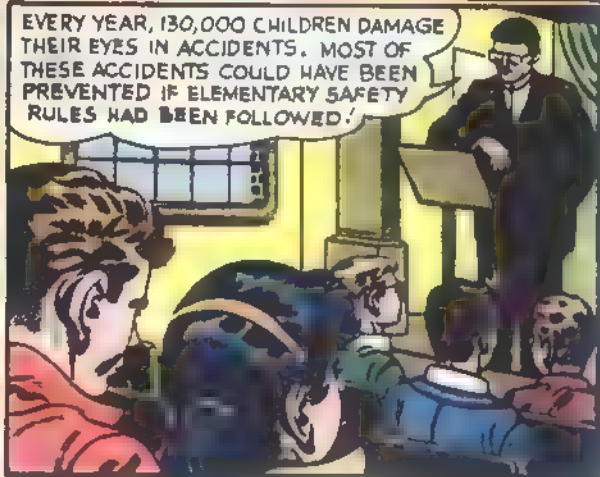
ON SALE
Everywhere MAR. 16th

How's Your EYE-Q?

I HOPE THIS TALK THEY WANT US TO HEAR DOESN'T TAKE TOO LONG. I WANT TO BLAST OFF THAT ROCKET WE MADE!



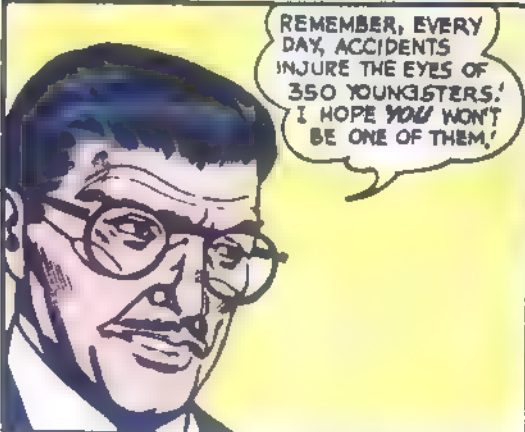
EVERY YEAR, 130,000 CHILDREN DAMAGE THEIR EYES IN ACCIDENTS. MOST OF THESE ACCIDENTS COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED IF ELEMENTARY SAFETY RULES HAD BEEN FOLLOWED!



"MOST TRAGIC ACCIDENTS OCCUR WHEN YOUNGSTERS PLAY, UNSUPERVISED OR ILLEGALLY, WITH FIREWORKS OR HOME-MADE ROCKETS... WHEN THEY 'FENCE' WITH STICKS... OR THROW STONES... OR ARE CARELESS WITH FIRES..."

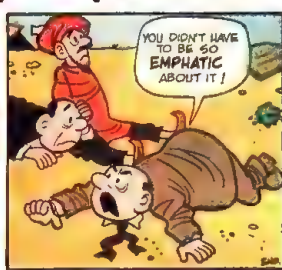
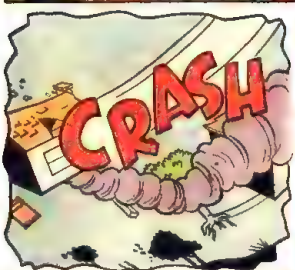
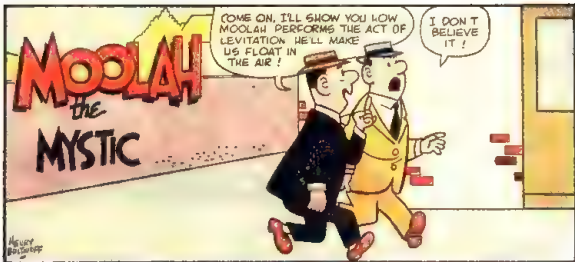


REMEMBER, EVERY DAY, ACCIDENTS INJURE THE EYES OF 350 YOUNGSTERS. I HOPE YOU WON'T BE ONE OF THEM!



1-1 GUESS WE'D BETTER NOT FOOL AROUND WITH THAT ROCKET YET, JIMMY! I'LL TELL DAD ABOUT IT AND WE'LL FIND OUT IF IT'S SAFE!





The **BEST** Comics  are **STILL 10¢**

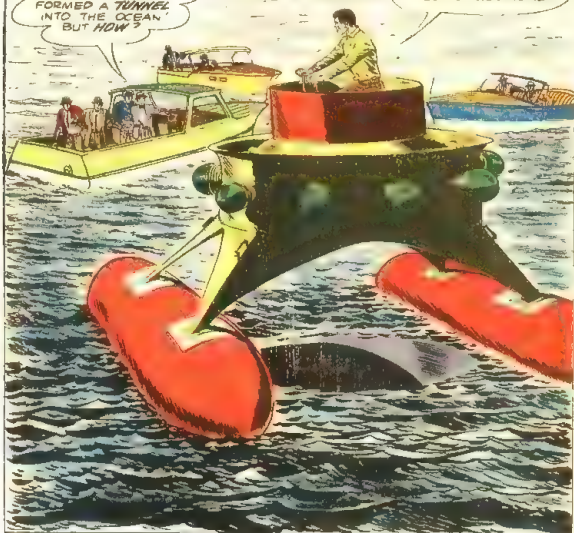


WHERE WAS HE GETTING
THE IDEAS FOR THE
FANTASTIC MACHINES
HE WAS BUILDING? HOW
COULD HE REACH OUT
ACROSS BLANK SPACE
AND CREATE THE IMAGES
FOR HIS AMAZING
INVENTIONS? YOU'LL
FIND OUT WHEN YOU
HEAR THE WHOLE
INCREDIBLE STORY OF...

the MIND MARAUDER

GREAT SCOTT! YOUR
MACHINE ACTUALLY
FORMED A TUNNEL
INTO THE OCEAN!
BUT HOW?

I--DON'T KNOW
HOW THE MACHINE
WORKS! TH--THE IDEA
JUST CAME TO ME
OUT OF NOWHERE!





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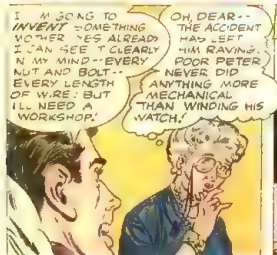
EVERYONE AGREED THAT PETER WAS A LUCKY REAL PROBLEM SOLVER. BUT TOO MUCH MONEY.

EVERYONE ALSO AGREED THAT THE TURNING POINT IN HIS LIFE CAME ONE DAY WHEN...



THOUGH THE METEORITE HADN'T HIT PETER BUT HE'S THE IMPACT AND KNOCKED HIM DOWN. HE LAY ASIDE FOR HOURS HE LAY BESIDE THE SLOWING OR STOPPING UNTIL...

THE DOCTOR PROCLAIMED PETER UNHARMED BUT NEXT MORNING WHEN HE RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS...





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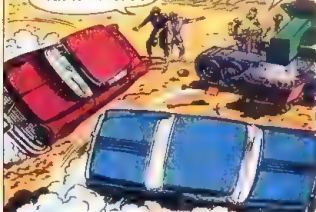
NEXT DAY, REPORTERS CROWDED THE AREA TO SCOOP, BUT...

GREAT DAY!
IT'S ACTUALLY
WORKING...
PULLING THE
IRON-ORE
RIGHT OUT OF
THE GROUND!



6-SURE... BUT IT'S ALSO ATTRACTING
EVERYTHING ELSE IN THE AREA
MADE OF IRON OR STEEL!
TURN IT OFF!

"GULP!"
"YOU
BET."



BUT FOR PETER VANDERLOCK, THE GREATEST
SHOCK WAS YET TO COME...

SWINDLER! YOU COPIED MY
ORE-EXTRACTOR TO THE LAST
DETAIL-- INCLUDING ITS FLAW
OF ATTRACTING OTHER IRON
AND STEEL IN THE AREA!

BY THUNDER!
THE TWO
MACHINES
ARE
IDENTICAL



YOU MUST BELIEVE
ME... I NEVER SAW
YOUR MACHINE! THE
IDEA FOR IT JUST
CAME INTO MY
MIND!

YOU'RE CRAZY
IF YOU EXPECT
ME TO SWALLOW
THAT! AND IF
YOU DON'T WANT
TO GET SUED,
YOU'D BETTER
DESTROY YOUR
COPY



LATER THAT EVENING...

PETER--YOU DID STEAL
THE PLANS OF THAT
MACHINE, DIDN'T YOU?

NO, MOTHER--YOU
MUST BELIEVE
ME! TH-THE
IDEA CAME TO
ME.. JUST...
JUST...



... JUST LIKE AN IDEA IS COMING
TO ME NOW FOR A--A WATER
BORER!





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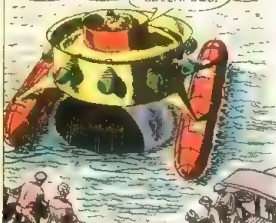
AND ONCE AGAIN, AFTER WEEKS OF WORK...

WOW!... THE MACHINE CREATED A TUNNEL RIGHT THROUGH THE WATER! HOW DOES IT WORK, MR. VANDER-CLOCK?

I--I DON'T KNOW! THIS IS EXACTLY AS I "SAW" IT!



TROUBLE IS--THE WATER WALL KEEPS ITS SHAPE ONLY FOR MINUTES, THEN COLLAPSES!



AT THAT MOMENT...

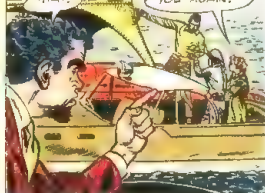
THE SAME THING IS WRONG WITH THE ORIGINAL MACHINE I BUILT, YOU CROOK! HOW DID YOU GET HOLD OF MY PLANS?

WHAT?? I DIDN'T STEAL YOUR PLANS! I--I THOUGHT UP THE MACHINE MYSELF!



HUMPH!... WE'LL SEE WHAT THE LAW HAS TO SAY ABOUT THAT.

COME ALONG, PETER... SOMEHOW, I THINK THE DOCTOR SHOULD EXAMINE YOU AGAIN.



THAT SAME EVENING IN THE SWANK VANDER-CLOCK DRAWING ROOM...

MMH... THERE IS ONLY ONE POSSIBLE EXPLANATION! THAT GLOWING METEORITE IN SOME STRANGE WAY, IT GAVE YOU THE ABILITY TO INTERCEPT HIGH-POWERED THOUGHT WAVES IN YOUR VICINITY!



YOU SEE, THE HARDER A MAN THINKS, THE GREATER IS THE ELECTRICAL ENERGY HIS BRAIN EMITS! INVENTORS, OF COURSE, HAVE EXTREMELY ACTIVE BRAINS.

AND MY BRAIN PICKS UP THEIR ENERGY! SO--IT'S TRUE, DOCTOR... I'VE BECOME A MARAUDER OF MEN'S MINDS!





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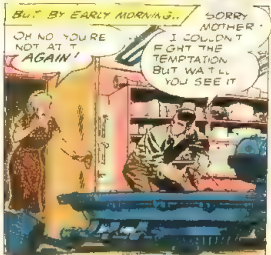
YES... BUT YOUR SOLUTION
IS SIMPLE, PETER... **DON'T**
BUILD ANY MORE OF THE
INVENTIONS WHICH
COME TO YOU!

SAY... THAT'S
RIGHT... I'LL
JUST IGNORE
'EM! WHAT'S
MORE, I'LL MAKE
A **PUBLIC EXPLANATION**,
FIRST THING
IN THE MORNING.



THE FOLLOWING NIGHT AS PETER RELAXED
IN HIS LIBRARY

WOW... HOW WHAT
AN IDEA SHITTING
ME TO FANTASIES
INCREDIBLE... I'LL
COULD BE BUILDING
SUCH A TERRIFIC
MACHINE... I MUST
RESIST THE URGE
TO DO IT.



BUT BY EARLY MORNING...

OH NO YOU'RE
NOT AT IT
AGAIN!

SORRY
MOTHER...
I COULDN'T
FIGHT THE
TEMPTATION
BUT WAIT...
YOU SEE IT

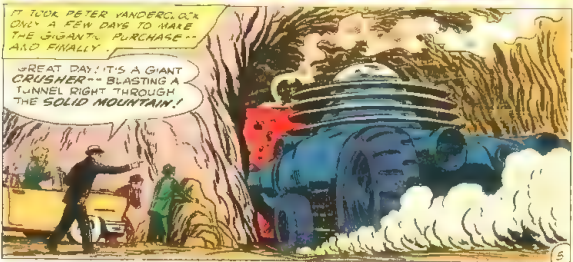


AND THE PASSED AND AT
LENGTH THE JOB WAS DONE

OH THAT'S
THE MOTHER

GOODNESS... IT
DOESN'T MAKE
ANY SENSE AT
ALL... HOW DOES
IT WORK PETER?

THIS MACHINE IS
RADIUM-POWERED...
I'LL NEED A MILLION-
DOLLARS' WORTH OF
RADIUM
FOR ITS TANK



IT TOOK PETER VANDERGLICK
ONLY A FEW DAYS TO MAKE
THE GIANT PURCHASE...
AND FINALLY...

GREAT DAY! IT'S A GIANT
CRUSHER... BLASTING A
TUNNEL RIGHT THROUGH
THE SOLID MOUNTAIN!



HOUSE OF SECRETS



FOLLOWING THE AMAZING DEMONSTRATION

THE BIG QUESTION IS-- WHO'S THE GENIUS WHO BUILT THE ORIGINAL ONE?

YEAH--AND WHY HASN'T HE COME FORWARD TO CLAIM HIS INVENTION.



HE ANSWERED BY A THE LABORATORY OF HORROR OF THE "HARVEST" OF THE CRUSHED SKULLS

HANA I KNEW I CONCENTRATED HARD ENOUGH THAT STRANGE YOUNG MAN COULD NOT RESIST BUILDING MY MACHINE AND NOW THAT HE'S FILLED ITS TANK WITH THE PRECIOUS RADIUM I COULD NOT AFFORD TO GO AND CLAIM MY BRAIN WORK!



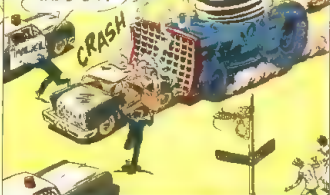
PETER VANDERCLOCK WAS AWAKENED SUDDENLY AT DAWN, THE NEXT DAY WHEN

GOOD GRIEF! THAT MAN... I RECOGNIZE HIM... A CRIMINAL SCIENTIST--AND HE'S STEALING THE ELECTRONIC CRUSHER! I-- 'D BETTER CALL THE POLICE!



AS THE CRUSHER HEADED DOWN MAIN STREET.

THIS IS A JOB FOR A TANK. GET ON YOUR RADIO JIM!



BUT WHEN THE ARMY'S BIGGEST JUGGERNAUTS WENT TO THE ATTACK...

GREAT GUNS! THAT MECHANICAL MONSTER CAN CRUSH STEEL PLATES LIKE TISSUE PAPER-- AND GRIND OUR SHELLS TO PULP!





HOUSE OF SECRETS



BUT THE WORST WAS YET TO COME...

THE CRUSHER IS
MOVING TOWARDS
THE CENTER OF
THE CITY.



AND BEFORE LONG...

OH, NO! IT'S CRASHING
RIGHT THROUGH THE
BANK BUILDING!

SURE--AND WHEN
ORWELL REACHES
THE VAULT, HE CAN
HELP HIMSELF
TO MILLIONS.



YOU, VANDERLOCK--
YOU BUILT THAT
MACHINE! MAYBE YOU
CAN TELL US HOW
TO STOP IT!

HE CAN'T TELL YOU
A THING! ALL HE
DID WAS TO COPY
THAT MACHINE!

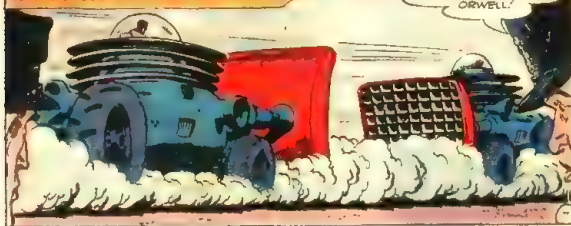


COPIED IT?
THAT'S IT!
THAT'S THE
ANSWER!



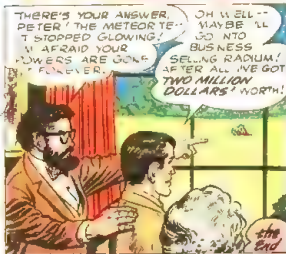
IT WAS AN AWESOME SCENE THAT
TOOK PLACE, LATER THAT SAME DAY...

LOOK--VANDERLOCK
IS CATCHING UP TO
ORWELL!





HOUSE OF SECRETS



GEMS of DESTINY!



THE RENOWNED BRITISH EXPLORER, AND AUTHOR SIR RICHARD BURTON, CARRIED A LARGE **STAR SAPPHIRE** ON HIS JOURNEYS, WHICH IS REPUTED TO HAVE ENABLED HIM TO REACH HIS DESTINATIONS SAFELY. HIS ATTENDING NATIVES CONSIDERED IT A SPECIAL HONOR IF SIR RICHARD GAVE THEM A GLIMPSE OF THE FABULOUS GEM, FOR THEY BELIEVED THAT THE MERE SIGHT OF IT WAS SUFFICIENT TO BRING THEM GOOD LUCK...



IN PAST CENTURIES, MANY WARRIORS TOOK ALONG AN **AMETHYST** WHEN THEY RODE OFF TO BATTLE, BECAUSE OF THE PREVAILING SUPERSTITION THAT THE CRYSTALLIZED QUARTZ HAD THE POWER TO PROTECT THEM FROM DEATH AND INSURE THEM VICTORY OVER THEIR ENEMIES...



TURQUOISE-WEARERS WERE CONFIDENT THAT IN CASE OF AN ACCIDENTAL FALL, THE SKY-BLUE MINERAL WOULD PREVENT THEM FROM SUFFERING A SERIOUS INJURY



SHY PERSONS WHO WERE INCLINED TO BE POOR TALKERS WORE A **CARNELIAN** IN THE BELIEF THAT THE RED-HUED GEM WOULD BOLSTER THEIR COURAGE AND STRENGTHEN THEIR ARTICULATION...



The **BEST** Comics



are **STILL 10¢**



!! MY QUEST AT THE
CLYDE BEATTY & COLE BROS. 3-RING
CIRCUS

AT **PALISADES**
 AMUSEMENT PARK, NEW JERSEY

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FREE RIDE
 ADMIT ONE
"TILT-A-WHIRL"

Revenge of the Fabulous Falcon

JOHN WHEELER eyed the distant bird greedily. It was the largest, most beautiful falcon he had ever seen. He raised his high-powered shotgun, adjusted the sights and drew a bead on the graceful, winged creature.

Suddenly, a memory crossed his mind. This bird—this very falcon he was trying to bring down—was the one the local natives considered sacred. Kill it, his guide had warned him, and he would bring upon himself the everlasting wrath of the falcon's kingdom. For another falcon would take its place, and carry out the vengeance of its ancestor.

How foolish! A bird that could punish him? John Wheeler swiftly recalled all the money he had robbed, all the people he had cheated in his lifetime, without ever having been touched by the law. What had he to fear from a native superstition?

As the falcon descended from a cloud, he again took aim, then squeezed the trigger. There was a sharp *crack!* and the bird plummeted in a heap. Breathlessly, John Wheeler darted to retrieve his prize.

He had to make his way back to the port city by himself—his guide had deserted him hours ago, after learning of his intention to kill the sacred creature. The more Wheeler thought about it, the more he laughed. Indeed, after having the bird stuffed and mounted, he would sell it to a museum, legend and all, at a fine profit. Some curse!

The voyage home proved peaceful enough, except for the gulls. They hovered over the ship ominously, in huge flocks—but, unlike ordinary sea gulls, it didn't seem to be food they wanted. Even the captain noticed this. "Those birds just seem to be following someone aboard—keeping vigil over someone on this ship," he commented.

Wheeler wondered, too—wondered if this had anything to do with . . . *no!* Sheer coin-

cidence, that was all. Some quirk of climate must have brought the gulls here in droves.

But back at home port, more birds were waiting—birds of every conceivable variety, some of them never before seen in this part of the world. As Wheeler drove home in a taxi, they seemed to fall into formation and fly in the same direction. They hovered over his small mansion as he frantically turned the key in the lock and bolted inside. Peering out his window, Wheeler watched them glide about aimlessly for a few moments, then disperse in all four directions. At last, they were gone, and John Wheeler heaved a sigh of relief. He had won again.

The first news that greeted Wheeler, when he woke up, the following morning, was a radio report of a wave of thefts that had rocked the city during the night. The robberies ranged from the most petty trinkets to valuable objects of gold and diamond. There was something else, too—about the persons who had been robbed. Why were all their names so familiar?

Abruptly, the answer hit him—just as there came a loud rapping on his door. He opened it to admit a detective, displaying a search warrant, flanked by two uniformed policemen. The trio, with Wheeler walking behind, moved rapidly through every room, finally coming to a halt in front of the fireplace. For there, in a small mound, lay all the loot of the previous night's robberies! The birds! It was they who had done this—spiriting away the valuable objects and depositing them down the chimney!

A fitting revenge, Wheeler mused hopelessly, as they drove him to headquarters. Those familiar names—all of the victims were persons whom Wheeler had once before cheated and robbed with impunity. He peered out the window of the police car, and there in the distance, he could detect it—a giant, graceful falcon—winging its way toward the sea.



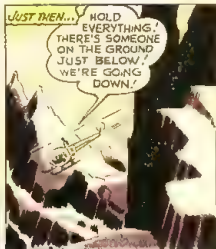
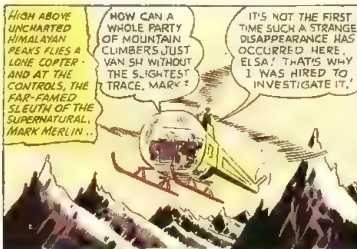
HIGH ABOVE THE CLOUDS IT STANDS - A VAST UNINHABITED WASTELAND -- AND HERE, MARK MERLIN, INTREPID SLEUTH OF THE SUPERNATURAL, CHALLENGES THE KNOWN AND THE UNKNOWN, WHEN HE LEADS THE STRANGEST SAFARI ON EARTH THROUGH...

THE VALLEY of DOOMED CREATURES!

A
**MARK
MERLIN**
MYSTERY

MARK--YOU'VE LED
US INTO A DEAD END!
THERE'S NO WAY LEFT TO
ESCAPE THE BEAST
OF BELMORA!







HOUSE OF SECRETS



MINUTES LATER, AS THE AIRCRAFT SPEEDS TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN WALL...

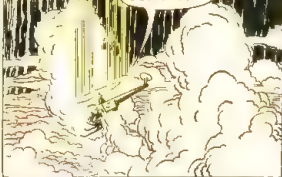
THAT'S ODD... A LAYER OF CLOUD HOVERS OVER THE ENTIRE AREA ON THIS SIDE!

YES... AND THE REST OF STEVENS' PARTY COULD BE RIGHT BELOW IT!



SUDDENLY...

EEYOW! HANG ON, ELSA! WE'RE CAUGHT IN A VICIOUS DOWNDRAFT!



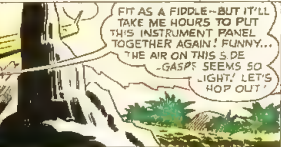
FOLLOWING A FORCED CRASH-LANDING...

ARE--ARE YOU OKAY, MARK?

THUD



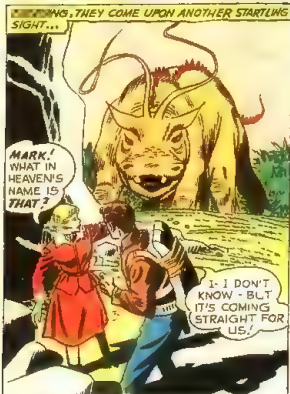
FIT AS A FIDDLE--BUT IT'LL TAKE ME HOURS TO PUT THIS INSTRUMENT PANEL TOGETHER AGAIN! FUNNY... THE AIR ON THIS SIDE--GASP! SEEMS SO LIGHT! LET'S HOP OUT!



...WHEN, THEY COME UPON ANOTHER STARTLING SIGHT...

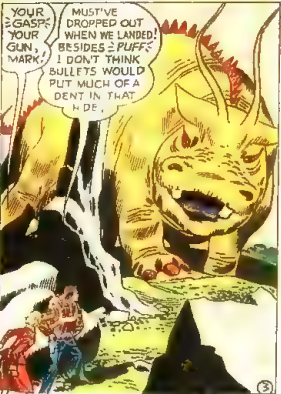
MARK! WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME IS THAT?

I-I DON'T KNOW - BUT IT'S COMING STRAIGHT FOR US!



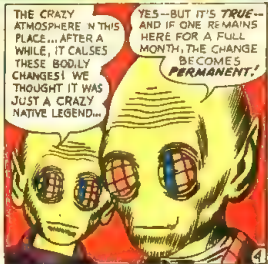
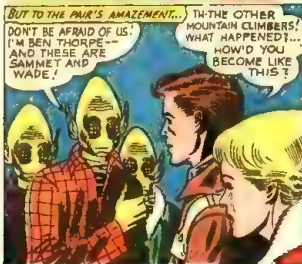
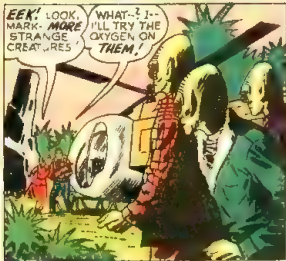
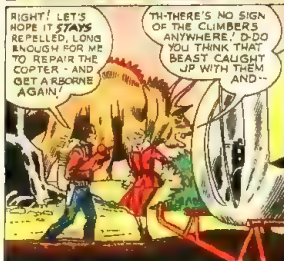
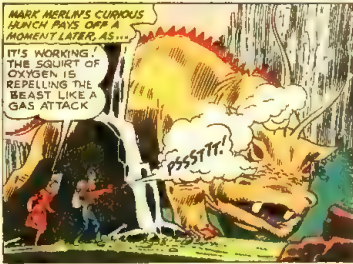
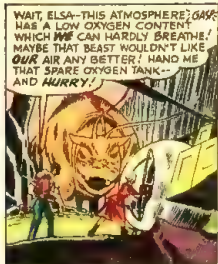
YOUR GASP! YOUR GUN, MARK!

MUST'VE DROPPED OUT WHEN WE LANDED! BESIDES--PUFF! I DON'T THINK BULLETS WOULD PUT MUCH OF A DENT IN THAT HIDE.





HOUSE OF SECRETS





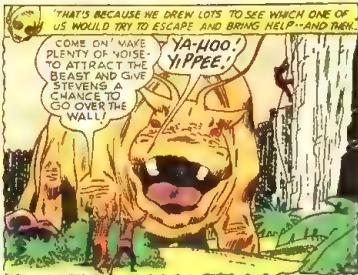
HOUSE OF SECRETS



TH-THEN, WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE?

ARE YOU KIDDING? YOU SAW THAT WEIRD CREATURE-- BUT **YOU** COULD GET PAST IT?

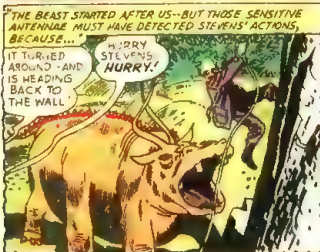
BUT STEVENS-- THE CLIMBER WE FOUND OUTSIDE-- **HE GOT OUT!**



THAT'S BECAUSE WE DREW LOTS TO SEE WHICH ONE OF US WOULD TRY TO ESCAPE AND BRING HELP--AND THEN...

COME ON! MAKE PLENTY OF NOISE-- TO ATTRACT THE BEAST AND GIVE STEVENS A CHANCE TO GO OVER THE WALL!

YA-HOO! YIPPEE!



THE BEAST STARTED AFTER US--BUT THOSE SENSITIVE ANTENNAE MUST HAVE DETECTED STEVENS' ACTIONS, BECAUSE...

IT TURNED AROUND--AND IS HEADING BACK TO THE WALL!

HURRY STEVENS! HURRY!



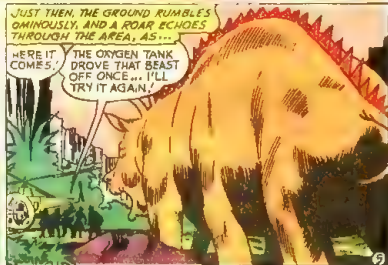
W-WE JUST MADE IT, AND LOOK-- HE'S CHANGING BACK TO NORMAL!

SURE-- BUT NOW THAT BEAST KNOWS WE'RE HERE! COME ON--WE'VE GOT TO HIDE OURSELVES BEFORE IT RETURNS!



AMAZING! BUT WHERE IN THE WORLD DID THAT BEAST COME FROM?

NO ONE KNOWS THE ANSWER TO THAT--OR TO ANYTHING ABOUT THE FANTASTIC ATMOSPHERE TRAPPED BEHIND THESE WALLS!



JUST THEN, THE GROUND RUMBLES OMINOUSLY, AND A ROAR ECHOES THROUGH THE AREA, AS...

HERE IT COMES!

THE OXYGEN TANK DROVE THAT BEAST OFF ONCE... I'LL TRY IT AGAIN!

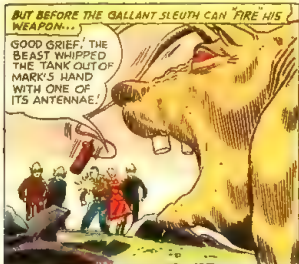


HOUSE OF SECRETS



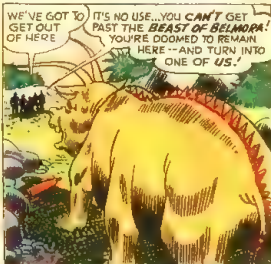
BUT BEFORE THE GALLANT SLEUTH CAN FIRE HIS WEAPON...

GOOD GRIEF! THE BEAST WHIPPED THE TANK OUT OF MARK'S HAND WITH ONE OF ITS ANTENNAE!



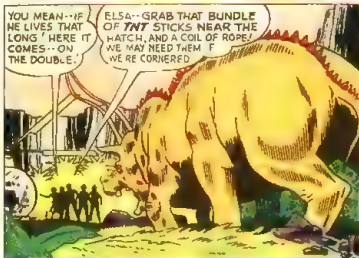
WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE

IT'S NO USE...YOU **CAN'T** GET PAST THE **BEAST OF BELMORA!** YOU'RE DOOMED TO REMAIN HERE--AND TURN INTO ONE OF US!



YOU MEAN--IF HE LIVES THAT LONG! HERE IT COMES--ON THE DOUBLE!

ELSA--GRAB THAT BUNDLE OF **TNT** STICKS NEAR THE HATCH, AND A COIL OF ROPE! WE MAY NEED THEM IF WE'RE CORNERED



AS THE DEADLY CHASE BEGINS...

IT'S HOPELESS! WE TRIED **TNT** ON IT ALREADY--AND THE BEAST LAUGHED THE BLASTS OFF! BESIDES--YOU'RE HEADING INTO **DOOM VALLEY!** MOST OF IT IS IMPASSABLE!

MAYBE SO-- BUT THERE'S NO PLACE ELSE TO RUN!



SOON...

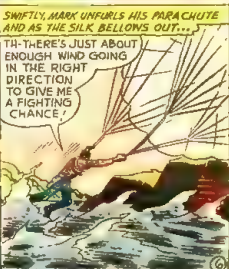
THESE RAPIDS... NO SWIMMER ON EARTH COULD CROSS THEM!

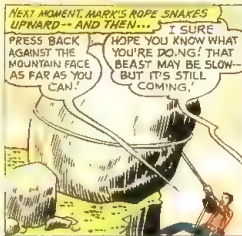
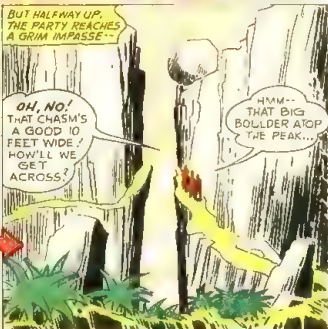
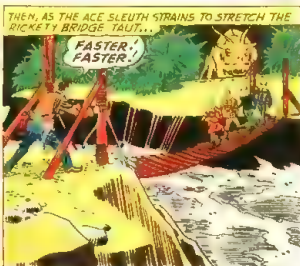
HMM THERE'S A ROPE FOOTBRIDGE ACROSS THE STREAM--BUT IT BECAME LOOSE AND SAGGED ON THE OTHER SIDE! I'VE GOT AN IDEA...



SWIFTLY, MARK UNFURLS HIS PARACHUTE AND AS THE SILK BELLOWS OUT...

TH--THERE'S JUST ABOUT ENOUGH WIND GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION TO GIVE ME A FIGHTING CHANCE!







THE HUGE ROCK TEETERS ON THE EDGE FOR AN INSTANT, THEN...

JUST AS I HOPED THE BOULDER BECAME WEDGED BETWEEN THE MOUNTAIN WALLS AT THE NARROW PART--FORMING A BRIDGE!

THWACK!



TAKE THE TRAIL LEADING DOWN THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN! I'LL JOIN YOU AS FAST AS I CAN!

BUT, AS THE NAPLESS PARTY EMERGES ON THE OTHER SIDE...

THIS DOES IT, MARK! WE'VE WALKED SMACK INTO A DEAD END--THERE'S NO WAY PAST THAT WALL!

I--I'M AFRAID YOU'RE RIGHT, ELSA... AND HERE COMES THAT BEAST!



NO--WAIT! THE WAY THIS GRASS IS BENDING...THERE MUST BE A SMALL BUT POWERFUL BREEZE COMING OUT OF THAT CAVE! COME ON!



BRIEF MOMENTS LATER...

JUST AS I THOUGHT...THERE'S A THIN CRACK--PROBABLY WHERE THE MOUNTAIN WALL IS THINNEST! STAND BACK, EVERYONE...



LIGHTING THE FUSE, MARK HURLS THE BRACE OF TNT STICKS...

IF THAT DOESN'T WORK--WE'RE FINISHED!

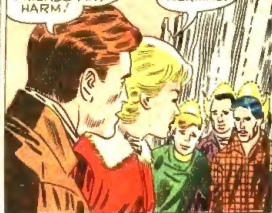


BUT ABRUPTLY, AS A POWERFUL BLAST OF AIR FROM THE OUTSIDE RUSHES VIOLENTLY INTO THE VALLEY...



YES... BUT THAT FRESH AIR ISN'T DOING OUR MOUNTAIN-CLIMBING FRIENDS ANY HARM!

TH- THEY'RE TURNING BACK TO NORMAL!



LET'S GO! WE'LL TRAVEL THE LONG WAY AROUND TO WHERE THE COPTER IS-- THEN WE'LL PICK UP STEVENS!

WE SURE OWE YOU A LOT, MISTER! BUT COME TO THINK OF IT-- WE DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR NAME!



WHY-- HE'S MARK MERLIN, THE FAMOUS INVESTIGATOR!

MARK MERLIN? NO WONDER THAT WEIRD BEAST DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE!



For The
**VERY
BEST**



...and
**STILL
10¢**



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Sell these popular Patriotic and Religious Mottoes

SEND US NO MONEY IN ADVANCE

Just write and ask us to send you 40 of these beautiful glittering mottoes which the public likes so well. Sell them easily and quickly to your friends and neighbors for only 35c each. At the end of 14 days send back, if you wish, all mottoes you have not sold, and send us only 25c for each you have sold. You keep all the rest of the money.

IF YOU SELL 25, YOU KEEP \$2.50

IF YOU SELL 30, YOU KEEP \$3.00

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REMEMBER: No money is needed in advance. You take no risks. You can return all the mottoes you do not sell. You do not pay shipping costs or split your commission. You keep all the profit on each sale.

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THE WORLD'S GREATEST MOLDER OF HANDSOME HE-MEN AND CHAMPS out of WIAKLINGS says

YOU can now get FREE!

ALL these 5 famous PICTURE-PACKED COURSES to Make YOU a SUPER-MAN.

(formerly \$5.00 each)
Now FREE to you if you mail coupon AT ONCE! LAST CHANCE!



"NO MATTER WHAT YOUR AGE I'll show you, by my quick, easy SECRETS

How to GAIN OR LOSE UP TO 50 LBS. FAST
like my pupils here did and THOUSANDS do now."

17 YEAR OLD SILLS

"I GAINED 60 LBS. OF SHAPELY MIGHTY MUSCLES."

BEFORE

mailing coupon, I was a 125 lb. 6 ft. skinny weakling.

AFTER

says JOHN SILL.

28 year old Felipe Mendoza

"I LOST 30 LBS. OF DANGEROUS UGLY FAT 4 INCHES OFF MY WAIST!"

"That 220 lb. FAT-BOY at the right was ME a few short weeks ago."

BEFORE

AFTER

YOU can add 7 inches to your CHEST 3 1/2 inches to each ARM and the rest in proportion just as I did.

YOU can WIN the 18" tall SILVER TROPHY with name on it. A GOLD MEDAL, \$100, as I did."

45 year old FATHER and 18 year old SON — new Pals — train JOWETT way together!



"Both gained pounds of powerful muscles. Advise all you fathers and sons to send for the Jowett courses without todays delay."

—LARRY CAMPBELL

JOWETT streamlined my body, made me a new man my 47" chest my 32" waist 15" difference attracts admiration at the beach.

YOU become a WINNER in ALL you do like these and MILLIONS of my pupils!



YOU become a STAR in ANY SPORT? YOU fear NO MAN or BULLY!

SKINNY OR FAT, 15, 20, 30 OR 40 YEARS OF AGE I'LL BUILD YOU INTO A NEW ATHLETIC MIGHTY-MUSCLED ALL-MALE HE-MAN

in 10 THRILLING MINUTES a day, as I have done to MILLIONS in 35 YEARS."

GEORGE JOWETT

4 TIMES WINNER WORLD'S STRONGEST AND MOST PERFECTLY DEVELOPED MAN title, wearing CHAMPIONSHIP MEDALS, and MEDALS honoring him as "WORLD'S BEST Body Builder"

This now MAGNIFICENT, MODERN HERCULES, 26 year old teacher, William Butler,



says to YOU, "No matter WHAT your age, I advise you, SEND for the JOWETT WONDER PICTURE COURSES at once.

Under the World's GREATEST BODY-BUILDER, George Jowett, I now have 18 1/2" ARMS, a 52" CHEST my STRENGTH has greatly improved. So have my sports. I have won titles like 'Mr. Virginia', 'Mr. State Y.M.C.A.', etc."

YOU can soon be a HERO of MEN like Butler is and an IDOL of WOMEN in a few weeks!

Yes! In just 10 THRILLING MINUTES a day, in the SECRECY OF YOUR OWN ROOM at home, MY RAPID-FIRE, EASY as ABC FAMOUS PICTURE METHODS will start building you THE VERY FIRST NIGHT. I'll show you How to Mold 16 INCH ARMS of MIGHT, a 50" deep 48 INCH CHEST housing TIRELESS LUNGS, WIDE MANLY SHOULDERS — a BROAD BRAWNY BACK, tapering to a SLENDER WAIST with punch-proof STOMACH MUSCLES, LEGS of RUNNING POWER

WOMEN always say, "I just adore JOWETT ALL-MALE HE-MEN".

Now I don't care how skinny or flabby you are now, if you're in your teens, twenties, thirties or forties, I'll show you in just 10 thrilling minutes in your home, how you can make yourself over by the easy, quick method I turned MILLIONS from weak to WORLD CHAMPION and burned MILLIONS of others into all-male he-men!

Yes! You'll add INCHES of MIGHTY MUSCLES to your ARMS, deepen your CHEST broaden your BACK and SHOULDERS, from HEAD to HEELS you'll gain SIZE, POWER, LIGHTNING SPEED, ENDURANCE. You'll become a SUCCESSFUL, BE-MAN in LOOKS and ACTS — a WINNER in EVERYTHING — athletics, business, studies.

BEFORE

mailing coupon this JOWETT pupil was this 90 lb. skeleton. Gained 70 lbs. Made football team.

AFTER

You wouldn't give me a tumble before I gained 70 lbs. 28 JOWETT lbs.

Fasciava

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GREAT BECK, NEW YORK

Dear George: Mail me FREE all 5 HE-MAN Building Picture Courses. Include PHOTO BOOK of FAMOUS STRONG MEN.

- ☐ I enclose 10c for mailing and handling.
- ☐ I am under no other obligation.
- I am checking everything I need to give me the kind of body I want.
- ☐ I want to gain _____ lbs. (fill in). ☐ Triple my strength.
- ☐ I want to streamline my body, get rid of flabby fat.
- ☐ I want to add inches of muscle to my ☐ ARMS ☐ CHEST
- ☐ SHOULDERS ☐ POWERFUL LEGS ☐ SLIM WAIST
- ☐ I want to become a winning athlete. ☐ I want new pro

NAME _____ AGE _____

(please print or write plainly)

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZONE _____ STATE _____

FREE

\$80 worth of Sports, Self-Defense, Strong-man Stunts Courses Apparatus. Let me know how to get these FREE!

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\$100
5 for
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**BIG ENOUGH
FOR 2-3
KIDS!**



SPECIAL GIRL'S PLAYHOUSE NOW AVAILABLE!

Same size, shape and price as cabin. Imprinted brick walls, French windows, folded wood-slut shutters, flowers, shrub, sloping roof, large door, etc.

FREE

Large 2"x8" Name Plate fits on door. House can be personalized with child's name.

Orders Shipped Within 24 Hours!

FRONTIER CABIN

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NEW YORK 36, NEW YORK

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Please send me items checked:

- ☐ Frontier Cabin for \$1.00 plus 25¢ postage and handling
☐ Girl's Playhouse for \$1.00 plus 25¢ postage and handling
☐ Frontier Cabin or Giant Playhouse or Any Combination - 5 for only \$4.00 plus \$1.00 postage and handling

I enclose ☐ Cash

☐ Check ☐ M.O.

Sorry, No C.O.D.'s

Name _____

Address _____

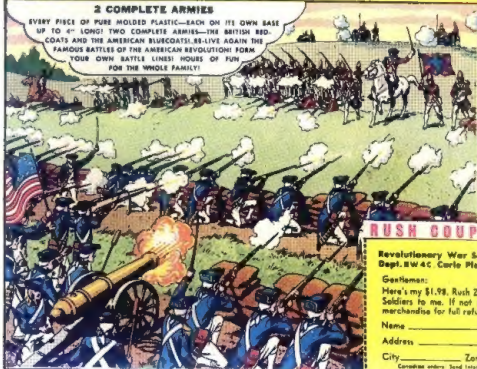
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- 36 Dragons (Cavalrymen)
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- 12 Sharpshooters
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- 24 Mohawk Indians
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Complete orders: Send International Money order for \$1.98